

THE ADEQUACY OF CURRENT INTERAGENCY DOCTRINE

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
Strategy

by

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ABSTRACT

THE ADEQUACY OF CURRENT INTERAGENCY DOCTRINE, by MAJ Allan M. Selburg, 62 pages.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze whether or not the current doctrine for the inclusion of interagency coordination in a Joint Task Force or equivalent headquarters is adequate. The analysis engine used is two case studies that highlight the different aspects of interagency coordination between the Department of Defense (DoD) and other United States Government agencies. The first case study is an analysis of the United States participation in the international relief operation in the wake of the Asian tsunami in 2005. This operation demonstrates an example of an operation outside the United States in which the DoD was not the lead agency, and one that is largely regarded as a success. The second case study used is the federal relief operation in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. This operation demonstrates an example of a domestic operation in which the DoD was not the lead federal agency, and which is largely regarded as a failure. These case studies demonstrate that current interagency doctrine is inadequate to the task of coordinating large-scale national or international crisis, and that reform is needed in order to fully integrate United States Government efforts at home and overseas.

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ACRONYMS

CMOC	Civil Military Operations Center
COCOM	Combatant Command
COM	Chief of Mission
DART	Disaster Assessment and Response Team
DCO	Defense Coordinating Officer
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
DSCA	Defense Support to Civil Authorities
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
IO	International Organizations
JFO	Joint Field Office
JIACG	Joint Interagency Coordination Group
JTF	Joint Task Force
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NORTHCOM	United States Northern Command
PACOM	United States Pacific Command
PFO	Principal Federal Officer
PVO	Private Volunteer Organization
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

There is a great deal of ongoing debate within the United States Government, and particularly within the Department of Defense, on how to broaden the inclusion of all branches of government into military operations. The perceived failure of the interagency planning and execution processes in postwar stability and reconstruction operations in Iraq and Afghanistan is driving much of this recent debate, but the issue of interagency cooperation is not new. In the post Cold War world of failing states and unprecedented levels of integration of global economic and informational systems, a fully integrated effort in military operations is crucial.

Research Question

While the subject of interagency cooperation is both enormous and complex, this thesis will deal with only one facet of this issue. Entire books have been and will continue to be written on the broader subject of interagency cooperation. The question this paper attempts to answer is: Is current doctrine for interagency coordination in a Joint Task Force headquarters or similar sized organization adequate?

In order to answer this primary question, three secondary questions will be used. The first secondary question that needs to be answered is, What is the current doctrine for interagency coordination? The answer to this question establishes a baseline to gauge the effectiveness of current doctrine. The second subordinate question is, What is required for interagency doctrine to be adequate? The answer to this question forms the evaluation criteria against which current doctrine is measured. The third and final secondary

question is, Who is responsible for current doctrine (who is the proponent)? The answer to this question will detail who is responsible for writing and promulgating current interagency doctrine.

Background

Interagency coordination is a particularly relevant topic in the current conflicts raging in Iraq and Afghanistan. These two operations have highlighted both the need for a fully integrated interagency process in campaign planning at the Joint Task Force (JTF) level, and the lack of such planning during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq. While the outcome of both of these ongoing conflicts has not yet been determined, enough time has passed since both conflicts began to see the successes and failures in interagency coordination in these two JTFs. The volume of articles, studies, and official publications that deal solely with the subject of interagency coordination has exploded recently and is a direct reflection of the ongoing efforts to address both perceived shortcomings and examples of success in current interagency doctrine.

Similarly, both the massive USG relief effort in response to Hurricane Katrina and the USG support to the international relief effort after the Southeast Asian Tsunami highlight the subject of interagency cooperation and integration. For the Katrina relief effort, interagency cooperation was required within the United States, with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as the lead federal agency. The Southeast Asian Tsunami involved an overseas humanitarian relief operation in which the Department of State (DoS) was the lead agency, and the DoD provided the preponderance of assets to support a larger international response to the disaster and

subsequent humanitarian crisis on the Indonesian island of Sumatra and other hard hit nations in the region.

Key Definitions and Terms

In order to properly frame the discussion, several key terms used throughout the paper need to be defined. Joint Publication 3.08, Volume 1, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization and Non-Governmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations*, defines “interagency coordination” as the coordination that occurs between agencies of the U.S. Government (USG), including the Department of Defense (DoD), for the purpose of accomplishing an objective (2006, Glossary). This is the definition that will be used throughout this paper to evaluate the adequacy of current doctrine for interagency coordination. This definition was selected because it is the one promulgated by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff and the DoD, and thus the definition referenced in all subordinate military doctrinal references. Inconsistencies in how other USG agencies define interagency coordination may be noted elsewhere in this thesis.

“Doctrine” is defined by the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary as a statement of fundamental government policy especially in international relations, or as a military principle or set of strategies (2006). Both of these definitions will be used here, as they represent two aspects of doctrine critical to this analysis. The first represents a generic civilian governmental view of doctrine, while the second represents a purely military definition. These two perspective definitions translate directly to the method of analysis used in this thesis, as it will look at current doctrine from both a DoD (military) perspective and a USG (non-military) perspective.

The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines “adequacy,” from the root word “adequate”, as being lawfully and reasonably sufficient (2006). In this context, adequacy in interagency doctrine is defined as doctrine that fully provides the necessary framework for all agencies of the USG to participate in the planning and execution of a Joint military operation.

Finally, the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines a “proponent” as one who argues something (2006). In this context, the proponent is defined as the government agency responsible for drafting or changing published doctrine, and disseminating that doctrine throughout the USG.

Limitations and Delimitations

Because of the enormous scope of the overall subject of interagency coordination within the USG, some limitations are required in order to place this analysis in context. First, this paper will only address the adequacy of “current” interagency doctrine. It will not explore the historical development of the interagency process, except as it directly influences current doctrinal procedures for interagency coordination. As such, all references used will be limited to those dated 1 January 2000 or later. The only possible exception to this limitation is if a given USG agency doctrine in current use was published prior to 1 January 2000.

The continued and rapid evolution of interagency doctrine and procedures also requires a cutoff on the inclusion of new sources of information. This cutoff is 1 January 2007. A limit is required because each month a flurry of new articles and point papers on interagency processes are published, and many USG agencies are currently trying to

update their doctrine on this subject. Draft doctrinal publications will be used as appropriate.

Likewise, the sheer size of the USG and the number of agencies potentially involved in planning and execution by a given JTF requires some limitation on the number of agencies evaluated. For this analysis, a handful of agencies will be evaluated and considered representative of the overall USG. The exact agencies examined may vary, but will focus heavily on the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security, the two largest USG agencies involved in military operations. Subordinate agencies of these two departments, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) or the Federal Emergency Management Organization (FEMA), may be examined separately for reasons of clarity.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to provide an update on the current effectiveness of doctrine governing interagency coordination at the JTF level. The current Army transformation program focuses on providing Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) to a standing JTF headquarters for employment in combat or stability operations. These BCTs are combined at the JTF levels with Joint assets from the other services, as well as capabilities provided by non-DoD agencies from elsewhere in the USG.

A fundamental understanding of whether or not the current doctrine for interagency coordination is adequate is critical to any current or future member of a JTF staff. It provides the necessary baseline for what staff members from other government agencies expect the planning and execution process to be when they join a JTF headquarters. Further, it provides DoD members of the JTF staff an understanding of

what to expect from members of other government agencies. If everyone on the staff arrives at the headquarters with a common operation framework of the interagency process, that process is much more timely and efficient.

Furthermore, as stability and reconstruction operations become more common than conventional warfighting, more and more JTFs will find themselves involved in these operations. As such, agencies such as the Department of State will increasingly have a leading, if not the lead role in planning and executing JTF operations. By providing a report on the adequacy of current doctrine for interagency coordination, military and civilian staff members in the JTF headquarters can better prepare for the close coordination necessary in these operations.

Conclusion

The focus of this thesis is to answer the fundamental question of whether or not current doctrine for interagency coordination in a Joint Task Force headquarters or similar sized organization is adequate. This topic is particularly relevant because the complexity of modern warfare and the rampant progress of globalization will make future campaigns by the U.S. military more difficult than ever. Only through the focused, integrated efforts of the entire USG can the United States achieve its national objectives.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a large body of literature discussing the different aspects of interagency coordination. In order to answer the question of whether or not current doctrine for interagency coordination in a Joint Task Force headquarters or similar sized organization is adequate, three principle categories of source information are explored. The first category focuses on current doctrinal publications from different USG agencies that deal with the subject of interagency coordination. The second category of sources used discusses current and proposed initiatives to reform or enhance current doctrine for interagency coordination. The final category of sources deals with two recent interagency operations and forms the basis for a case study analysis of current interagency doctrine.

Current Doctrinal Publications

Different USG agencies have a wide variety of publications that deal with doctrine and policies affecting their operations with other USG agencies. For the purpose of this study, select publications from the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of State (DoS), and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are reviewed.

First and foremost, the DoD recently published its revised manual for interagency and multi-national operations, Joint Publication 3.08, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization During Joint Operations*, Volumes I and II. This is the doctrinal template that mandates where, when and how Joint military headquarters (such as a Joint Task Force) should coordinate with representatives of other USG agencies during the conduct of operations. The proponent for this manual is the

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and it super cedes any other service publication dealing with interagency coordination.

First and foremost, this manual explicitly lays out two important aspects of interagency coordination as it affects command responsibilities and relationships. For operations outside the United States, the DoD will often be designated as the lead agency, due to its relatively greater capability to rapidly move and control assets anywhere in the world. Other government agencies would then participate in the operation in a supporting role to the DoD. Conversely, within the boundaries of the United States, the DoD acts in a supporting role to the appropriate local, state, or federal civil authorities depending on the situation. The DoD combines its efforts with those of other federal agencies to provide needed capabilities to the relevant civil authority or agency leading the effort. The exception to this is the Homeland Defense mission, for which the DoD is the lead federal agency and conducts operations to defend the United States against outside threats.

The Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) is a centerpiece of the DoD's capability to coordinate with other government agencies. Designed to bring an interagency coordination capability to the operational level, the JIACG is an interagency staff group composed of military and civilian experts that allows the combatant commander (COCOM) to collaborate with non-DoD government agencies. The JIACG has no set structure, and is tailored by each COCOM to suite the specific needs of a given theater.

JP 3.08 also discusses the formation by the Joint Force Commander (JFC) of a Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force to respond to possible contingencies,

humanitarian crises, or nation-assistance missions. As for the composition of these task forces, the joint publication only specifies a likely requirement for a robust civil affairs representation, leaving their exact structure undefined. Because of organizational and structural differences, the likely focal point of coordination and deconfliction for civilian agencies is the JTF headquarters. This includes issues or operations that the military would normally handle at a subordinate headquarters.

For non-DoD agencies, the Department of Homeland Security has the most formal guidance on the form and substance of interagency participation in response to man-made or natural disasters within the United States. The *National Response Plan (NRP)*, December 2004, was created in response to *Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 (HSPD-5)*, issued by President Bush. HSPD-5 called for the creation of an integrated, national approach to incident management that would effectively coordinate the resources of the entire federal government. The NRP is supported and endorsed by numerous cabinet-level and subordinate USG agencies, all of which agree to provide resources, personnel, and coordination as required.

The basic premise of the NRP is to build off of the principles of federal support inclusive to the National Incident Management System, which provides a model for government support to state and local authorities in the event of a terrorist attack, national disaster, or other incident of national significance. The NRP groups similar capabilities into Emergency Support Functions, making the NRP a modular plan that only activates those capabilities that are immediately required for a particular disaster or emergency. This reduces the burden on DHS in determining which agencies are required for support

to a disaster and eliminates redundancy and waste. Each Emergency Support Function describes the required capabilities and responsible USG agencies that are needed.

To provide a command structure for incident response, the NRP calls for the establishment of a Joint Field Office (JFO). The JFO is a temporary federal facility that is the focal point for coordination of federal support to an incident response operation. A Principal Federal Officer (PFO) leads the JFO. The PFO is the senior federal official directly participating in the federal response effort. For immediate coordination of support, the Regional Resource Coordination Center (RRCC) handles the initial federal support efforts until a JFO is established.

DoD support to the NRP is coordinated through the Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO). The DCO operates inside the JFO, coordinating the provision of DoD support for various ESFs. Because of the constraints imposed by federal law, the military chain of command remains inside of the DoD; military personnel and resources are never placed under the direct command of the JFO or another federal official. Instead, the DCO becomes the single focal point for the provision of military support to the overall incident response.

The Department of State (DoS) does not have a single doctrinal source for interagency coordination at levels below the NSC. Instead, individual agencies within the DoS publish guidelines for operations in conjunction with military forces as they see fit. For instance, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), a semi-autonomous agency within the DoS, has a standard guide published for its Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. The *Field Operations Guide for Disaster Assessment and Response*, version 4.0, dated September 2005, is a comprehensive guide for all aspects of

disaster assessment and relief operations. An incredible 342 pages long, this guide covers every facet of disaster relief and serves as an invaluable reference for USAID representatives and Disaster Assessment and Response Teams (DARTs).

Annex F of the *Field Operations Guide* discusses working with the military in the field. First, it has a primer on how the DoD classifies different emergencies, such as natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies that result from some form of armed conflict. Military capabilities are provided primarily to supplement the capabilities of the host nation, civilian relief agencies (including USAID), and other international or non-governmental relief agencies to meet the needs of the natural disaster or humanitarian crisis. These capabilities can include transportation, security, logistics, medical support, and communications. It identifies the DoS Office of Political/Military Affairs as the principal agency within the DoS that coordinates with the DoD. However, the *Guide* identifies the necessity of the DART to provide liaison with the military at all levels, from tactical to the Joint Task Force headquarters, in order to fully synchronize its efforts with those of the supporting (or supported) DoD forces.

The remainder of Annex F is devoted to the difficulties DART members may encounter when working with the military. The *Guide* notes some of the unique aspects of military culture and how it can affect relations with non-military organizations during operations. DART members are expected to advise the military during operations about the different capabilities of civilian relief agencies and serve as a buffer between the two groups. Perhaps most importantly, the *Guide* clearly states the need for effective interagency coordination during relief operations, and notes that without outside input to

the planning and execution of a relief operation, the military will conduct the mission as it sees fit.

Ironically, the *Guide* seems to devote equal attention to the damage that poor coordination can cause to the DART members' standing and the USAID image with the military. Significant space is devoted to ensuring that the DART fully ascertains the mission objectives and intent of military units deployed in support of humanitarian relief operations, integrates itself into the Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC), and provides the necessary credentials and security clearance for full inclusion into the JTF planning process. It even describes how DART liaison officers should avoid compromising security by reporting classified information obtained from the JTF staff, and avoid reporting opinions or positions held by the JTF commander or staff that may not reflect the final opinion of the DoD as presented to the National Security council.

Proposed Initiatives and Reforms

The perceived failings of the interagency process in planning and executing recent combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have generated significant interest in the subject recently. This trend is perhaps most evident in the number of articles and monographs dealing with interagency coordination written by recent classes from a number of different senior leader-level schools within the DoD and DoS, such as the Army War College and the National Defense University. While the focus of most of this work is on stability and reconstruction operations (as applied to Iraq and Afghanistan), the thoughts and ideas from the authors are indicative of the overall feeling from the interagency community on the effectiveness of the interagency process as currently envisioned by doctrine.

In *Harnessing the Interagency for Complex Operations*, , Neyla Arnas, Charles Barry and Robert Oakley attempt to catalogue the known models for interagency cooperation at the strategic, operational, and tactical level (2005). The models described include existing structures as well as proposed new structures for improvement of the interagency process.

At the strategic level, the article describes the current interagency coordination structure and procedures used by the National Security Council to provide policy analysis and recommendations for strategic decisions. This methodology is specified in National Security Policy Directive (NSPD) 1. The authors further describe two proposed models for improving interagency integration, one proposed by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the other by the Defense Science Board. Both recommendations center on the need for dedicated interagency planning groups assigned to actual or potential complex operations that would actually draft plans for implementation, rather than merely deconflict issues between agencies. The Defense Science Board model would also create a small, permanent cadre within the NSC (rather than dependent on appointment by subsequent administrations) to provide continuity and expertise for long-range planning.

At the operational level, the authors describe in detail the structure and roles of the JIACG at each of the COCOM headquarters within the DoD. In accordance with Joint doctrine, each COCOM has crafted the structure and level of participation by other government agencies in the JIACG to suit their individual needs. The substance of each JIACG generally reflects the type and intensity of operations ongoing within each COCOM area of responsibility. For instance, the U.S. Northern Command

(NORTHCOM), focused on homeland security, has a broad-based JIACG with more than 60 different agencies in residence. A recurring theme amongst the different COCOM JIACGs is a lack of resources for permanent military and civilian staff that limits day-to-day operations.

The authors go on to describe the new JIACG concept developed by U.S. Joint Forces Command. This new model envisions the JIACG as a permanent full-time planning body assigned to each COCOM. Each would have a core group of permanent representatives, with additional agencies participating remotely as required. The JIACG would become the principal planning and coordination staff for regional engagement and crisis response. The CSIS model, integrated with the strategic interagency model, also calls for quarterly regional summits that would integrate policy with regional operations and oversee NSC-drafted policy execution by all agencies. Additionally, it calls for the creation of deployable Interagency Crisis Action Teams that would be dispatched by the NSC to lead a true interagency planning process at the operational level in response to a particular crisis or complex operation.

At the tactical level, the authors describe a number of different interagency efforts currently in use, including the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in Afghanistan, DARTs deployed by USAID, and interagency representation within the Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC). All are mission-specific organizations that are formed and deployed based on the needs of a given situation. Indeed, the authors note the often-huge disparities between individual PRTs in Afghanistan.

Under proposed new initiatives, the CSIS model calls for the establishment of an Interagency Task Force (IATF) to achieve unity of effort at the tactical level, specifically

for reconstruction and stability operations. The IATF would assume the lead from the COCOM once major combat operations were complete in a given area or region. The IATF would be civilian-led, directly control full interagency resources, and have dedicated funding authority.

In conclusion, the authors specify eight recommendations that would be inherent in any reform of the interagency process. All revolve around the necessity for action at all levels of government, the elimination of competing agencies and agendas, and unity of command for interagency resources involved in complex operations.

In *Interagency Adrift*, COL G. Scott McConnell identifies what he feels are the true impediments to change in the current interagency environment (2006). With the radical changes in the global environment, the structure and continuity of effort of the U.S. National Security Establishment is outdated and must adapt to the new reality of globalization, where foreign events and actions increasingly have rapid and significant effects domestically.

COL McConnell concludes that aside from the obvious challenges to true IA cooperation posed by changing realities, the internal culture and processes of different USG agencies are the true impediments to reform. Leadership, new management practices that recognize the value of interagency cooperation, and common doctrine development are all key aspects of needed reform. Without these, the incumbent culture of different agencies that are focused internally and see many interagency initiatives as threats to their individual identities and independent funding will prevent any meaningful change in interagency cooperation. Ad hoc interagency participation will remain the rule, with the resultant costs in performance and rapid action.

In a similar article for the July 2005 edition of *Small Wars Journal*, LTC Harold Van Opdorp discusses the current composition and future direction of the Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG). Formed on the model of an interagency counter terrorism task force operating in U.S. Pacific Command and managed by the U.S. Joint Forces Command, the JIACG is a DoD-sponsored initiative to better coordinate all USG capabilities at the COCOM level. The concept was endorsed by the NSC and has been implemented by all five COCOMs in one form or another.

LTC Van Opdorp proposes that the JIACG be transitioned from a coordinating and advisory group into a functional interagency headquarters, complete with the necessary tasking authorities and including a deployable component capable of deploying overseas in the event of a complex emergency. Each JIACG would maintain a regional focus and responsibility for translating national strategic policy guidance for their region into genuine campaign plans that fully integrate all USG agency efforts. While planning would be centralized, execution would remain decentralized, in order to avoid lengthy delays as issues filter up through different agency reporting chains.

In a 2004 research paper for the Naval War College titled *Joint Vision 2020's Achilles Heel: Interagency Cooperation between the Departments of Defense and State*, COL Ronald N. Light analyzes the current trends in the relationship between DoD and DoS through the lens of Joint Vision 2020, a roadmap for the future Joint armed forces issued by the CJCS in 2000. COL Light notes the compelling need for interagency cooperation as defined by current Joint doctrine, and then contrasts the reality of how little cooperation currently exists between the DoD and DoS.

COL Light notes that the proclivity for COCOM commanders to establish and execute what some refer to as separate foreign policy agendas in their areas of responsibility are really a response to the declining interest, effort and resources of the DoS diplomatic corps. He recommends that the DoD be the initiator of a renewed effort to more fully synchronize and coordinate DoD and DoS efforts worldwide. Because we have defined the roles and responsibilities we expect other USG agencies to fill during complex operations, the DoD must do more to help realize that doctrinal objective. The greater resources of the DoD can best effect such an effort, funding exchange programs, establishing permanent DoS positions in various COCOM headquarters, and expanding training and schooling facilities to help other USG agencies better meet the DoD's expectations of them when needed.

Case Study Resources

While the majority of the current debate about the adequacy of USG interagency efforts revolve around stability and reconstruction operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, there are many other examples of interagency operations from recent history. The two operations chosen for this study are the federal response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 (a natural disaster within the boundaries of the United States) and the USG humanitarian response to the Asian Tsunami in 2004 (a natural disaster outside the boundaries of the United States).

The Congressional Research Service prepared an updated report for Congress on the Asian Tsunami of 2004 titled *Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami: Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Operations*, dated 21 March 2005. The report provides a succinct summary of the disaster across the Indian Ocean region following a massive tsunami on

26 December 2004. The focus of the report is the overall humanitarian relief operation undertaken by the international community to alleviate the immediate suffering of those affected and to highlight the transition from immediate relief to reconstruction and recovery that was just beginning in March 2005 when the report was prepared.

In particular, the report highlights how various agencies of the USG provided relief in response to the disaster. The authors chose to focus primarily on how USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) coordinated the overall USG contribution to the relief effort, which in most affected nations was managed by the United Nations. The contributions of the DoD are also highlighted, particularly the air and naval elements moved into the disaster area in the immediate wake of the tsunami. The authors make note of both the overall success of the disaster response operation and the successful coordination of DoD assets with other USG agencies providing services or support, and the overall integration of the USG relief effort with the international and host nation relief efforts, overcoming some significant political and geographic obstacles to success.

In an article for *eJournal USA*, Ralph A. Cossa describes the overall effect that the US military contribution had on the tsunami relief operation. His article traces the evolution of the DoD effort from hasty orders to dispatch naval vessels into the region hours after the disaster, to the establishment of Joint Task Force 536 commanded by LTG Blackmon, commander of III MEF at Okinawa, Japan, and finally the task force's redesignation as Combined Support Force 536, a multinational effort headquartered at Utapao Airbase, in Thailand.

While Mr. Cossa notes the magnitude of the military response in terms of the number of ships, aircraft, and personnel deployed, he surmises that the most important

contributions that the DoD made were in the areas of command, control, and coordination. Using the wealth of military communications and surveillance assets available to them, the commanders and staff of CSF 536 became the hub around which all the other elements of the relief operation revolved. By effectively working with the different US embassies in the region and coordinating the DoD effort closely with the USAID DART teams and other resources deployed to the region, the military effort enhanced and synchronized the overall relief effort. This relationship allowed a rapid and seamless transition of responsibility to the UN and other USG and international organizations once their capability in the region grew sufficiently.

Rear Admiral David J. Dorsett, Director of Intelligence for U.S. PACOM during the tsunami, recently published an article in *Joint Forces Quarterly* titled “Tsunami: Information Sharing in the Wake of Disaster”. The focus of this article was how quickly U.S. PACOM intelligence and information collection assets, normally tasked with classified intelligence work, were retasked to provide crucial information to the tsunami relief operation. He details how PACOM, thanks to its existing relationships with other USG agencies, various embassy staffs in the region, and other nations was able to provide real time information, map products, and information-sharing support that made some elements of the relief operation viable, particularly in its earliest stages. This support showcases the value of establishing and preserving relationships with other USG agencies, as well as with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations (IOs) and foreign militaries.

The DHS Office of the Inspector General published its internal review of the federal response to the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. *A Performance Review*

of FEMA's Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina, published in March 2006, is part of the DHS attempt to answer the various charges of failure leveled against FEMA and the federal government for its disaster response efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Specifically, the DHS inspector general sought to examine whether or not the various plans and policies for disaster relief were adequate and operational in response to the disaster.

This report is a wide-ranging look at every aspect of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina. Beginning with a brief summary of events in the affected states, the review breaks down its analysis into several like topics, where issues were grouped together into four sections. The first, titled *Difficulty Adapting to New Response Plans*, examines the problems that local, state and federal disaster response agencies had in activating the different Emergency Response Functions (ESFs), establishing unified and integrated command structures, and deploying or restoring communications with the affected areas. The second section, titled *FEMA Provided Record Levels of Support, but Delivery Needs Improvement*, focuses on the challenges FEMA faced in how its various field offices order, track, and deliver support. Additionally, it looks at the critical personnel shortages FEMA faced in trying to stand up and enact all of the required ESFs simultaneously, as well as meeting the demands imposed by the sheer magnitude of the disaster. The third section, titled *FEMA Needs to Improve Readiness*, details the report's findings and recommendations on how FEMA can improve its overall readiness to respond to similar disasters. The final section, titled *Future Considerations*, explores some of the broader issues related to Hurricane Katrina that will require further

investigation, such as the overall culture of DHS and the sufficiency of DHS authorities under the Stafford Act.

The next chapter will discuss the methodology used in researching these sources and why they were selected. It will also discuss how these sources will be used to answer the research question of whether or not current interagency doctrine for a Joint Task Force or similar-sized organization is adequate.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The question this thesis seeks to answer is whether or not current doctrine for interagency coordination in a Joint Task Force (JTF) headquarters or similar sized organization is adequate. In order to answer this question, the research is focused on establishing what the basic framework of doctrine for various agencies of the United States government (USG) is, then analyzing it in terms of two examples of recent operations in which interagency cooperation was essential to the success or failure of the mission.

Research Methodology

Research for this thesis relied on three primary types of source information. These were current published doctrinal references of different government agencies, recent articles and monographs that discuss current issues and future initiatives of enhancing or improving interagency cooperation, and after action reports, synopses, and articles discussing perceived successes and failures in two recent operations that highlighted the issue of interagency cooperation.

The first research sources used were doctrinal publications of different USG agencies, such as the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS). These sources were searched and located using both government-sponsored and civilian database engines or search engines. All such sources used were publicly available and have no distribution restrictions. This limitation was used in order to maintain a security classification of unclassified for the overall thesis.

The objective of this line of research is to provide a baseline for current doctrine governing interagency cooperation. It also serves to answer two secondary research questions. The first secondary question answered is: what is the current doctrine for interagency coordination? The answer to this question is crucial in providing a benchmark against which to measure the success or failure of current doctrine.

The second secondary research question answered by this first category of sources is: Who is responsible for current doctrine (who is the proponent)? An analysis of the overall body of doctrinal publications studied will provide an answer to this question and permit analysis of each proponent's role in establishing and maintaining interagency doctrine.

The second category of source information used in this thesis is recent articles and monographs that discuss current issues and future initiatives of enhancing or improving interagency cooperation. These sources were also searched for and located with the same governmental and non-governmental databases as the doctrinal sources, with the same objective of maintaining an overall security classification of unclassified. These sources provide a sampling of current trends and initiatives in the areas of improving interagency cooperation. These sources are all from authors currently serving in the U.S. government in some capacity and who all have some degree of recent experience in operations involving interagency cooperation.

This second group of research sources is used to answer one of the secondary research questions in this thesis. The question answered by these sources is: What is required for interagency doctrine to be adequate? In this case, the thesis will use these

articles as a source for contemporary commentary on the adequacy of current doctrine, as well as a source for establishing metrics for determining adequacy.

The final category of research focused on after action reports, synopses, and articles discussing perceived successes and failures in two recent operations that highlighted the issue of interagency cooperation. These two operations were the federal relief effort in response to Hurricane Katrina and the USG contribution to the relief effort in the aftermath of the Southeast Asian Tsunami. In a similar fashion to the other research sources used, this research used only unclassified search engines and databases, and only used reports cleared for unlimited distribution.

The purpose of this category of research is to provide the necessary background information to permit the development and analysis of two case studies. These sources provide the specific information necessary to evaluate how successfully current interagency doctrine was applied during two recent operations, one inside the continental United States and one overseas.

Analysis Methodology

The primary means of analysis used in the development of this thesis consists of two case studies in which the USG conducted an operation that required the full integration of USG interagency assets in order to achieve the operation's stated goals. The two case studies are the federal relief effort in response to Hurricane Katrina and the disaster that developed in several states along the Gulf Coast in August 2005, and the USG contribution to the international relief effort after a devastating tsunami struck several nations in Southeast Asia in December 2004.

Hurricane Katrina provides an example where the Department of Defense (DoD) was not the lead federal agency, but instead found itself in a supporting role. Because the crisis occurred inside the United States, DHS had responsibility for coordinating the overall USG effort. The DoD did provide an enormous amount of resources, however, making this an excellent means to analyze exactly how well such assets were coordinated with the overall USG effort. In this event, the case study will examine the forces assigned to JTF Katrina as well as those forces associated with the DoD, but not under its direct control for this operation (especially the Coast Guard and elements of various state National Guards).

The tsunami relief operation in December 2004 is an example of a USG operation conducted overseas in which the DoD was not the lead agent. In this case, the Department of State (DoS) was the USG lead agency coordinating the overall operation, even though it did not provide the preponderance of the assets involved. This operation, conducted in several countries simultaneously and requiring the synchronization of the USG effort with both the host nation's and other international relief agencies, is an excellent example of a crisis response effort that required the full inclusion of an interagency effort for success.

Each of the two case studies is analyzed to determine how well the established doctrine for interagency coordination was followed by all USG agencies involved. The overall results of each operation are examined to determine if the success or failure of the operation was determined by how well doctrine was applied during its execution. Finally, each operation is examined to determine if the USG agencies involved have made attempts to modify or rewrite their doctrine for interagency coordination as a result of the

perceived success or failure of the operation. Proposed changes are viewed as evidence that the current doctrine, if followed, may have been inadequate to the task presented during each operation.

After detailing my conclusions based on these two case studies, I will provide a graphic summary of my conclusions showing how each case study answered my research questions. Table 1 will provide this graphical summary.

Table 1. Summary of Conclusions

Case Study	What is current interagency doctrine?	Who is the proponent for doctrine?	What is required for adequacy?	Is current doctrine adequate?
Asian Tsunami Relief				
Hurricane Katrina				

In the next chapter, I will use this research methodology to analyze the adequacy of current interagency doctrine when it was applied to these two recent USG operations. This analysis will focus on answering the primary research question of this thesis, which

is whether or not current interagency doctrine for a joint task force or similar organization is adequate.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

In attempting to determine whether current interagency doctrine is adequate, this thesis will explore two recent examples of complex operations involving significant interagency involvement by the Department of Defense (DoD) and other United States Government (USG) agencies. These case studies will provide the engine to drive an examination of what the applicable interagency doctrine was, whether or not it was followed by all affected USG agencies, and how the perceived success or failure has driven proposals either for reform of existing doctrine or for changes in how current doctrine is applied and executed.

Case Study 1: Asian Tsunami Relief

Background Information

On 26 December 2004, a magnitude 9.0 earthquake struck the ocean floor off the coast of Sumatra, an island in the Indonesian archipelago. The seismic event caused a massive tsunami, or tidal wave, to radiate out in every direction from the epicenter of the quake. Within minutes, the devastating wave had struck the coast of Sumatra and the Indonesian province of Banda Aceh; with hours, countries as far away as Somalia had been affected. An estimated 295,000 people died, and 5 million more were rendered homeless by the tsunami (Dorsett 2005, 12).



Source: Based on a map provided by the *Struggling to Bring Relief to the Survivors* report, *The Economist*, January 2005. Adapted by CRS. (K. Yancey 1/4/05).

Figure 1. Map of the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami
Source: (Margesson 2005, 2).

The scope of the disaster, one of the five worst natural disasters in history (Margesson 2005, 3), quickly overwhelmed the capabilities of those countries worse affected, particularly Indonesia and Sri Lanka. Within a day, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and India were declared disaster areas by their respective U.S. Ambassadors, allowing aid to be released through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Office of Foreign Disaster Relief (Margesson 2005, 1). However, the scope of the disaster required an immediate response that exceeded USAID's ability to adequately respond. This necessitated the extensive use of military assets in the near term relief effort. DoD assets, under the operational control of United

States Pacific Command (PACOM), responded rapidly to requests for support made by the Department of State (DoS).

The military contribution, called Operation Unified Assistance, eventually amounted to more than 16,000 military personnel operating from 25 naval vessels, 45 fixed wing aircraft, and 57 helicopters. The military's superior command and control capabilities were also critical, allowing a single command structure to coordinate the relief effort across the region and include a number of other national militaries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations (IO), and private volunteer organizations (PVOs) (Dorsett 2005, 12).

The overall relief operation is generally considered an enormous success. While the loss of life and level of destruction were immense, the loss of life due to the disruption of basic services, disease, and starvation that many predicted would follow in the aftermath of the tsunami never materialized. That the situation was so rapidly brought under control is a testament to the success of the international relief effort (Margesson 2005, 6-7). From the perspective of the DoD, Operation Unified Assistance can be declared successful because the military involvement was of such short duration. By the end of March 2005, a little over 90 days after the tsunami, the DoD had transitioned nearly all of its previous responsibilities to the United Nations or to USAID (Margesson 2005, 6).

The Strategic Setting: US PACOM

At the time the tsunami struck across the Indian Ocean region, US PACOM was already well positioned to coordinate an interagency response inside its area of responsibility. In the wake of the terrorist attacks on 9/11, US PACOM established its

Joint Inter-Agency Coordination Group Combatting Terrorism (JIACG/CT) to plan and supervise the command's efforts in support of the Global War on Terror. Over time, the benefits of this organization and the integrated nature of the counter-terrorism mission led to an expanded role of the JIACG/CT to include WMD proliferation security, transnational crimes, and regional maritime security (Arnas, Barry, & Oakley 2005, 11).

PACOM faced a number of challenges in responding to the tsunami. First and foremost, two of the worst affected nations suffered from internal armed conflicts that changed the character of the disaster in those nations from a simple (though massive) humanitarian crisis to a complex emergency involving significant security issues. The Aceh region of Sumatra had been closed to foreigners prior to the tsunami as a result of ongoing fighting there between the Indonesian military and anti-government separatists. The Indonesian military only reluctantly lifted these restrictions, and sought to restore them as quickly as possible once the immediate relief operation was complete (Margesson 2005, 22). Sri Lanka is also gripped with a long running civil war, where ethnic Tamil separatists control significant portions of the island. These active areas of fighting affected the distribution of aid, and prompted rebel claims that areas under their control were being intentionally neglected (Margesson 2005, 25).

Finally, the scope of the disaster combined with the presence of many foreign tourists in the affected area, especially from Europe, the United States, Australia, and Japan, to bring a massive multi-national effort to bear against the disaster. Controlling and coordinating this relief effort fell to the United Nations, through its Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) (Margesson 2005, 7). However, the ability of the UN to quickly mobilize the necessary personnel and resources needed to

fully control such a disparate and massive relief effort was lacking. US PACOM facilitated the initial command and control effort by transforming Joint Task Force 536, the US military task force headquarters given responsibility for conducting Operation Unified Assistance, into Combined Support Force 536. Located at U Tapao, Thailand, this JTF headquarters used its command and control capabilities to bring all of the participating nations and international/non-governmental agencies together to coordinate relief efforts (Dorsett 2005, 13). UNOCHA was an early and full participant in this effort, facilitating the eventual transition to full UN control and the deactivation of CSF-536 on 14 February 05 (Margesson 2005, 10).

Interagency Doctrine and Operation Unified Assistance

Operation Unified Assistance showcased the effect of interagency doctrine on a large USG effort in a foreign country. In particular, the doctrinal interaction between the Department of State (lead USG agency for the relief effort) and the Department of Defense (primary resource provider for the relief effort) were fully put to the test. I will examine how the applicable interagency doctrine was applied in this operation.

Department of Defense Doctrine

Joint Publication 3-08, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Non-Governmental Organization during Joint Operations*, Volume 1, describes for the DoD the doctrinal interagency responsibilities and relationships during joint operations. Broad in scope, this doctrinal manual reviews the established interagency relationships as they affect Joint military forces overseas, as well as detailing how to include interagency representation while organizing for crisis response across the full spectrum of operations.

As applied to the tsunami relief operations, DoD doctrine fully recognizes that the DoS is the lead USG agency for foreign humanitarian relief operations, as well as retaining responsibility for direct interaction with foreign governments (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2006, II-14). Doctrine specifies that for the DoD, the focal point for regional military activity is the affected COCOM, in this case US PACOM, and is charged with the responsibility to coordinate all activities with the DoS. However, the DoS focal point is the corresponding regional bureau at the DoS headquarters in Washington, creating a challenge in effective coordination. The manual also cautions against coordinating directly with the DoS Chief of Mission (COM) in the affected country, as the COM may not be empowered by the DoS to approve or endorse military operations within the region (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2006, II-14).

Figure 2 depicts graphically how joint doctrine envisions the interagency process for foreign crisis response to operate. In essence, the COCOM commander's staff (including the JIACG) functions as the final coordination point for most USG interagency functions, confining such activities to the Operational level. Most NGO/IO/PVO coordination is handled by the civil-military operations center (CMOC) established by the JTF headquarters. Functionally, this confines coordination with these organizations to the tactical level. The principal exception to this guide is the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), from USAID, whose actions are coordinated through the CMOC as well.

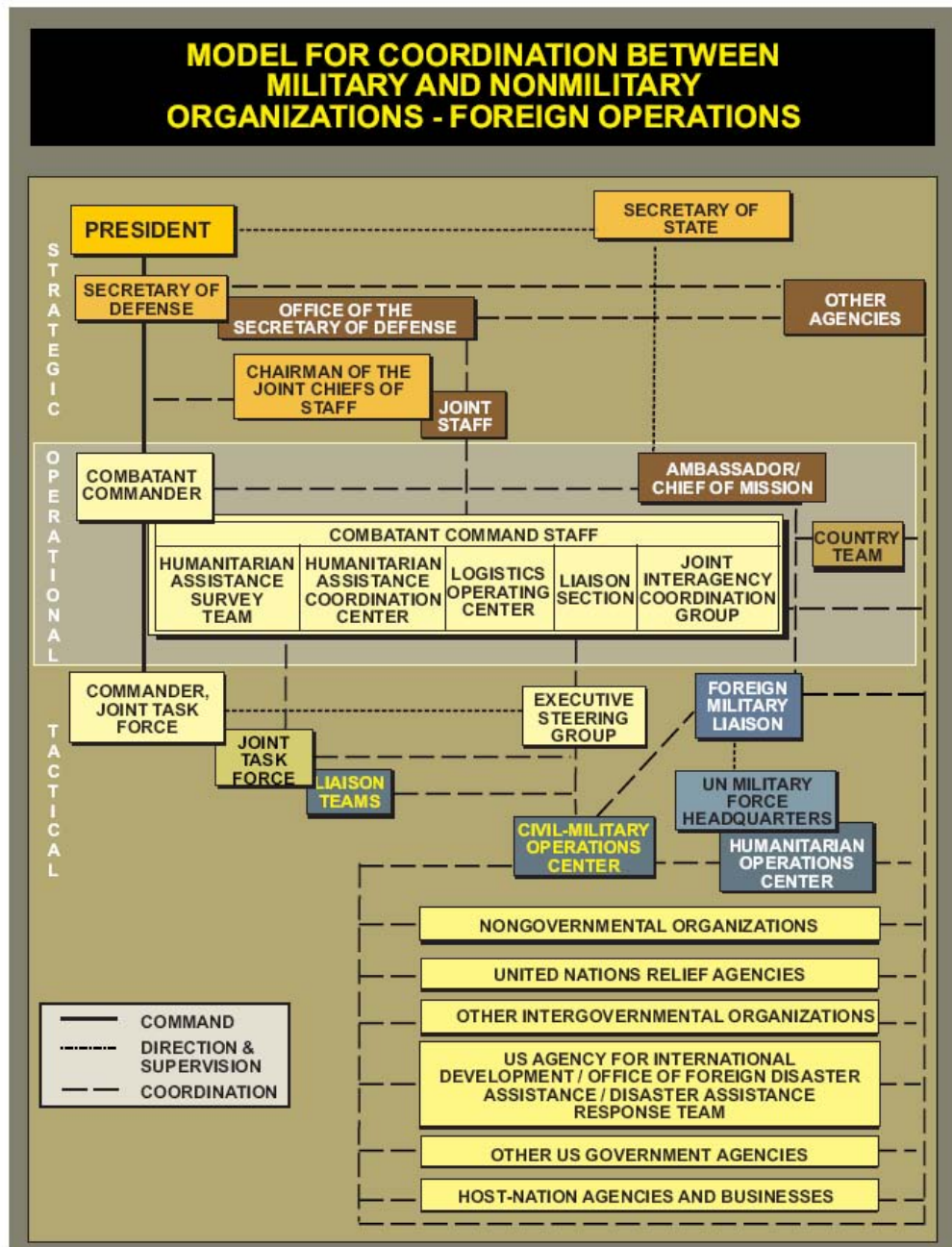


Figure 2. Model for Coordination between Military and Non-Military Organizations:
Foreign Operations
Source: (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2006, III-9).

In the case of the tsunami relief operation, however, this doctrinal model was not fully adhered to. The scope of the disaster and the degree to which NGOs/PVOs and IOs

were involved, required more tightly integrated coordination than that provided by the CMOC. The transition of JTF-536 into Combined Support Force 536 is the result of this realization on the part of the COCOM and JTF commanders. The tactical situation faced by the JTF commander, including the number of nations affected by the disaster, the number of national militaries, IOs, NGOs, and PVOs involved, and the geographic dispersion of operations necessitated a greater interagency role for the JTF headquarters than that envisioned by JP 3-08.

Rear Admiral Dorsett, the PACOM J2 (Intelligence) officer at the time of the tsunami, succinctly summarizes how the command identified the shortfall in the existing doctrinal structures for interagency coordination: “Within days, it became apparent that a traditional military command structure was not optimal for this non-traditional mission. The ensuring operation involved over 90 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and military forces from 18 nations.” (Dorsett 2005, 12.) The JIACG at PACOM, along with the various commanders and DoS executives involved, were able to react quickly to the changed circumstances and leverage their existing interagency and international relationships to excellent effect.

Some examples of this agility include full integration of IOs, particularly the UNOHCA, the World Food Program, and the World Health Organization, into the CSF-536 headquarters in U Tapao, Thailand (Margesson 2005, 31). Doctrinally, such interaction would have been handled in the affected nations by individual CMOCs, but the situation demanded other arrangements. The individual country teams, assigned by the Defense Attaché Office to support each DoS COM, quickly became overwhelmed by requests for support from the host nations, CSF-536 headquarters, and USG agencies.

They required augmentation of additional personnel and resources from PACOM in order to fully meet their mission requirements (Dorsett 2005, 14).

Department of State Doctrine

The doctrine most applicable to this case study from the Department of State is that used by USAID for its Office of Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (OFHA). OFHA's role in the immediate aftermath (60-90 days) of a disaster is to deploy Disaster Assessment and Response Teams (DARTs) to conduct assessments of what types and quantities of relief are required (Margesson 2005, 12). USAID is also the agency within the USG charged with USG and private sector assistance in response to a disaster (Margesson 2005, 12).

USAID has a published Field Operations Guide that provides guidance and instructions to its DART personnel involved in disaster relief operations. The Guide recognizes the need for close cooperation with the military during such operations by devoting a full appendix to the subject. Appendix F describes in detail where, when and how USAID personnel can and should interact with their military counterparts.

One of the first requirements that the Guide identifies is the need for the DART to "be involved [in planning humanitarian relief operations] to ensure interagency coordination and a single focus." (USAID 2005, F-6) The guide also identifies the CMOC as the location for most interaction with the military to take place, as the CMOC staff is primarily focused on humanitarian issues, rather than broader military issues.

However, although the Guide states the need for the DART to be tightly involved in the military planning effort, it provides little guidance on how to do so. While there is some discussion of how military organizational culture affects interaction with the DART

and other providers of relief, there is no discussion of how planning takes place, and the specific role that the liaison from the DART will play in the planning process. All in all, most of what the DART military liaison and individual team members need to know in order to fully integrate with the military planning staffs is left to “on the job” training.

Effectiveness of Doctrine during Operation Unified Assistance

From the start, it appears that the conventional process for coordination between the DoS and PACOM, as called for by doctrine, quickly broke down. As specified by JP 3-08, the PACOM commander and staff were required to work through the DoS regional bureau headquarters in Washington, D.C. before taking action in each of the host nations affected by the disaster. Further coordination was required with additional host nations from inside the PACOM AOR who had citizens present in the disaster zone and/or who were providing support to the overall relief effort. Additional requests for military support were being passed from the DART teams in the affected countries directly to CSF-536 headquarters as well, all of which doctrinally required at least an endorsement by the DoS regional bureau headquarters before they could be acted upon.

Further complicating matters was the often delicate diplomatic nature of the relief operation, particularly in Indonesia. Communications difficulties, especially in the earliest days after the tsunami struck, complicated this process. Had the appropriate doctrine been followed to the letter, the CSF-536 headquarters might have found itself transmitting requests for support on behalf of USAID DART teams back to Washington for approval, only to have those same requests passed back to CSF-536 via the PACOM headquarters after approval.

PACOM was able to work around these hurdles thanks to previous efforts at interagency integration pursuant to its conduct of the global war on terror. The PACOM commander had previously increased the size and capability of his JIACG by resourcing it with military and civilian staff from elsewhere within the command. The JIACG had established relationships with other USG agencies, embassies, and regional governments, as well as protocols and procedures for crisis response, prior to the tsunami (Arnas, Barry, and Oakly 2005, 12). These existing relationships allowed PACOM to work through (and around) the coordination and control hurdles that the doctrinal template would normally have dictated.

The other major area where the doctrinal template broke down during Operation Unified Assistance was in the interaction between the JTF headquarters and various NGOs/PVOs/IOs, as well as the DARTs mobilized by USAID. According to JP 3-08, most of these organizations would have communicated with the CSF-536 headquarters through its established CMOC. However, the nature of the disaster relief operation was such that CMOC operations became the principal mission of the CSF headquarters. In essence, it appears that the CSF headquarters in effect became a large CMOC, using its superior command and control capabilities to coordinate the overall relief operation until the UN relief headquarters was established and capable of assuming those functions on its own.

The Effect of Proposals for Change

It is instructive to see how, if at all, some of the leading proposals for reform might have affected the USG response to the tsunami. While these comparisons are

conjecture, the tsunami relief effort is an effective case study for evaluating the potential benefits of interagency reform at the COCOM and JTF levels.

The Joint Forces Command “Full Spectrum JIACG” concept envisions the JIACG as a “full time permanent planning and advisory body to the COCOM, owned and reporting to him or her” (Arnas, Barry, and Oakley 2005, 14). The core members of the JIACG would depend on the situation within each COCOM, with additional agency representatives tying in virtually as required. How the JIACG would coordinate with other agencies operating within its AOR would also depend on the situation and the determination of the COCOM commander. This model also sees the State Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stability (S/CRS) office within the DoS as complementary, adding capability to the JIACG as required (Arnas, Barry, and Oakley 2005, 15).

In essence, the JFCOM concept is a formal version of the JIACG already developed within PACOM. As regards its interactions with different DoS COMs and other agency representation throughout the COCOM AOR, it still leaves the specifics up to each COCOM commander to determine. The adoption of this model for reform would, however, alleviate some of the resource and representation issues faced by the PACOM JIACG. For instance, even after the success of the tsunami relief operation, PACOM is still negotiating for permanent assignment of a representative from USAID. The JFCOM model would institutionalize the advantages that the PACOM JIACG already possessed, but would do little to alleviate the doctrinal shortcomings in interagency cooperation.

The CSIS model of reform vests an interagency command structure, originating at the National Security Council level, with the authority to execute USG interagency efforts, rather than simply ensure coordination between agencies. As part of that system,

this model calls for the formation of rapidly deployable Interagency Crisis Action Teams, with full interagency representation, to assume command and control of USG efforts in response to a regional crisis like the Asian tsunami (Arnas, Barry, and Oakley 2005, 15). In this case, the interagency crisis action team would have filled the role played by CSF-536 in coordinating the overall relief effort in response to the disaster.

It is difficult to imagine just how differently the situation might have played out had an interagency crisis action team been charged with overseeing Operation Unified Assistance. The established relationships existent within PACOM, both in terms of interagency cooperation and coordination and in terms of military to military contact developed over time by PACOM, played a key role in rapidly adapting to the situation in the disaster affected region. How well an interagency command structure could have capitalized on those same relationships is unknown. However, a single interagency command structure would greatly simplify the doctrinal template for decision-making between different agencies by vesting a single headquarters in the AOR with the authority to authorize the commitment of all USG resources, regardless of the responsible USG agency.

Case Study 2: Hurricane Katrina Response

Background

On 29 August 2005 Hurricane Katrina made landfall near New Orleans, Louisiana, as a strong Category Three hurricane. The storm inflicted massive damage from its winds, rains and storm surge all along the Gulf Coast, from Louisiana to Florida. In addition, the storm breached the levee systems protecting the city of New Orleans,

causing them to fail and submerge much of the city under water, exacerbating the scope of the existing disaster (Department of Homeland Security 2006, 4).

The magnitude and scope of the disaster along the Gulf Coast was enormous, inflicting catastrophic damage in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. The areas worst affected suffered a complete breakdown in essential services, including power, water, communications, and in a few instances, basic governmental functions including law enforcement and medical support. More than 1326 people died, while hundreds of thousands more were displaced, including more than 250,000 in government-supported shelters. The disaster quickly overwhelmed local, state, and federal response capabilities (Department of Homeland Security 2006, 4).

The military component of the federal relief effort in response to Hurricane Katrina began before landfall, as Defense Coordinating Officers (DCO) activated their staffs and collocated with state emergency operations centers and FEMA Joint Field Offices (JFO) in the Gulf States. The DoD contribution to the relief effort would eventually grow to encompass tens of thousands of active duty, reserve, and national guard troops from all services and from across the United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) was the COCOM responsible for coordinating federal support to homeland defense, in this case through two subordinate headquarters directly responsible for Defense Support to Civil Authorities: US First Army, headquartered in Atlanta, GA, and US Fifth Army, headquartered in San Antonio, TX.

Hurricane Katrina was also unprecedented in how directly this disaster affected every American. A massive media presence in the disaster area projected the human tragedy of the hurricane onto every television in the nation. The damage to the oil

transport, refining, and production capacity of the Gulf region caused a unprecedented rise in gasoline prices nationwide, impacting every part of the nation and the economy. As might be expected, the federal response to the disaster received enormous public scrutiny, and the efforts of the federal government in the wake of the hurricane are widely perceived as an abject failure.

The Strategic Setting: USNORTHCOM

When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf coast, US NORTHCOM was a relatively new organization, formed after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. The objective of forming this new COCOM was to provide a comparable military headquarters to align with and support the efforts of the new Department of Homeland Defense. This placed NORTHCOM in the role of senior DoD field headquarters responsible for Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA), the doctrinal mission set for providing military assets for domestic disaster relief.

As might be expected from its responsibility for U.S. territory, the JIACG at USNORTHCOM is much larger in scope and membership than any other COCOM. USNORTHCOM's primary missions require close coordination and synchronization with most other government agencies. The NORTHCOM JIACG consists of resident members from more than 60 USG agencies, while more than 100 additional agencies collaborate remotely. Rather than simply existing as a coordination group as in other COCOMs, the NORTHCOM JIACG is a full and separate directorate within the command, led by a Senior Executive Service (SES) Director (Arnas, Barry, and Oakley 2005, 12).

For USNORTHCOM, the initial response to Hurricane Katrina was relatively straightforward. Ahead of the hurricane, in accordance with the doctrinal relationships

between the DHS and DoD for civil support, NORTHCOM waited to receive requests for support from FEMA. However, a lack of communications and situational awareness in the disaster zone left FEMA without a true appreciation of the scope of the disaster. Because the Joint Field Offices in Louisiana and Mississippi did not fully appreciate the collapse of local capability, they did not perceive a need for robust DoD assistance, and did not begin to provide significant requests for support to NORTHCOM until several days after landfall (U.S. Congress 2006, 26-29).

Once the scope of the disaster became apparent, NORTHCOM and the DoD took a much more proactive approach to the relief mission, in some cases identifying a need independently and then offering the required capability to FEMA. A Joint Task Force headquarters, JTF Katrina, was formed to provide military command and control to the tens of thousands of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines pouring into the region. Complicating this command effort was the serpentine command structure in the disaster areas. National Guard troops, deployed in a Title 32 status (under state control), were provided directly to the governors of Louisiana and Mississippi for relief operations. Regular Army, Army Reserve, Navy, Marine, and Air Force assets were deployed under Title 10 status (Federal military control), and so remained solely under DoD control and supported the relief effort through the two DCOs assigned to the JFOs in Louisiana and Mississippi. It took a considerable amount of time to achieve a unified military command structure under JTF Katrina, and to provide a clear understanding of where, when, and how military assets were being employed in the relief effort (U.S. Congress 2006, 26-30).

The relief effort eventually succeeded in regaining control over the situation in Louisiana and Mississippi, in mitigating the effects of a second hurricane to strike the

Gulf coast (Hurricane Rita), and to transition the federal response from relief to reconstruction and recovery. Although the reconstruction process continues today, the perceived failure of the federal relief effort for Hurricane Katrina has called into question the adequacy of the National Response Plan and the ability of the federal government to handle a disaster of similar magnitude in the future.

Interagency Doctrine and the Hurricane Katrina Response

The massive federal response to Hurricane Katrina was remarkable both in its scope and with the level of involvement of DoD assets in providing support to FEMA. This response would eventually entail more than 22,000 active-duty Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines, the activation of Title 32 status for more than 40,000 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, and hundreds of ships, fixed-wing and rotary wing aircraft. I will describe how current doctrine envisioned that response occurring as a coordinated federal disaster relief effort.

Department of Defense Doctrine

JP 3-08 volume 1 clearly states that DoD assistance during domestic disaster relief “is known as CS [Civil Support] within the defense community because the assistance will always be in support of an LFA [Lead Federal Agency]” (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2006, I-7). Federal law prohibits the deployment of federal troops within the United States except under specific conditions, and for disaster relief those deployments will always be made in support of some other federal agency, most commonly the DHS. The National Response Plan specifies that the DoD is a supporting agency for all 15 Emergency Support Functions (ESF), responding to requests for support from FEMA

through the DFO collocated at the JFO in the affected state or states (Department of Homeland Security 2004, 10). Amazingly, JP 3-08 does not describe the DoD contribution to domestic disaster response in terms of the NRP, referring instead to a number of previous response plans and agreements that would eventually be subsumed and replaced by the NRP (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2006, II-6). This is all the more surprising because the NRP had been in circulation for more than a year when the current edition of JP 3-08 was published in March 2006.

Figure 3 shows the doctrinal relationships between military and non-military organizations during domestic civil support operations. The key relationship shown in this diagram is that between the Joint Task Force commander and the Principal Federal Officer (PFO), who is the overall director of the Federal response to a disaster incident. Because of Title 10 provisions dictating that the chain of command for military forces cannot depart from the Department of Defense, the only relationship between DoD forces and the PFO is the coordination effected through the Defense Coordinating Officer (DFO) embedded in the FEMA-operated Joint Field Office in the disaster area.

As a supporting agency to DHS, the natural tendency is for the supporting DoD components (typically NORTHCOM) to assume a passive stance in regard to providing support, limiting preparations to planning and selected alert orders until receiving a specific request for support from FEMA through the applicable DCO. While adequate for smaller scale disasters where only limited (and specific) DoD support assets are required, this passive stance proved inadequate to meet the response needs of the Katrina disaster. Combined with the lack of situational awareness of the JFOs concerning the scope of damage and collapse of local and state capability in the hardest hit regions, which

delayed the initiation of requests for support, this passive response delayed significant DoD response in the disaster zone for several days (U.S Congress 2006, 26-25).

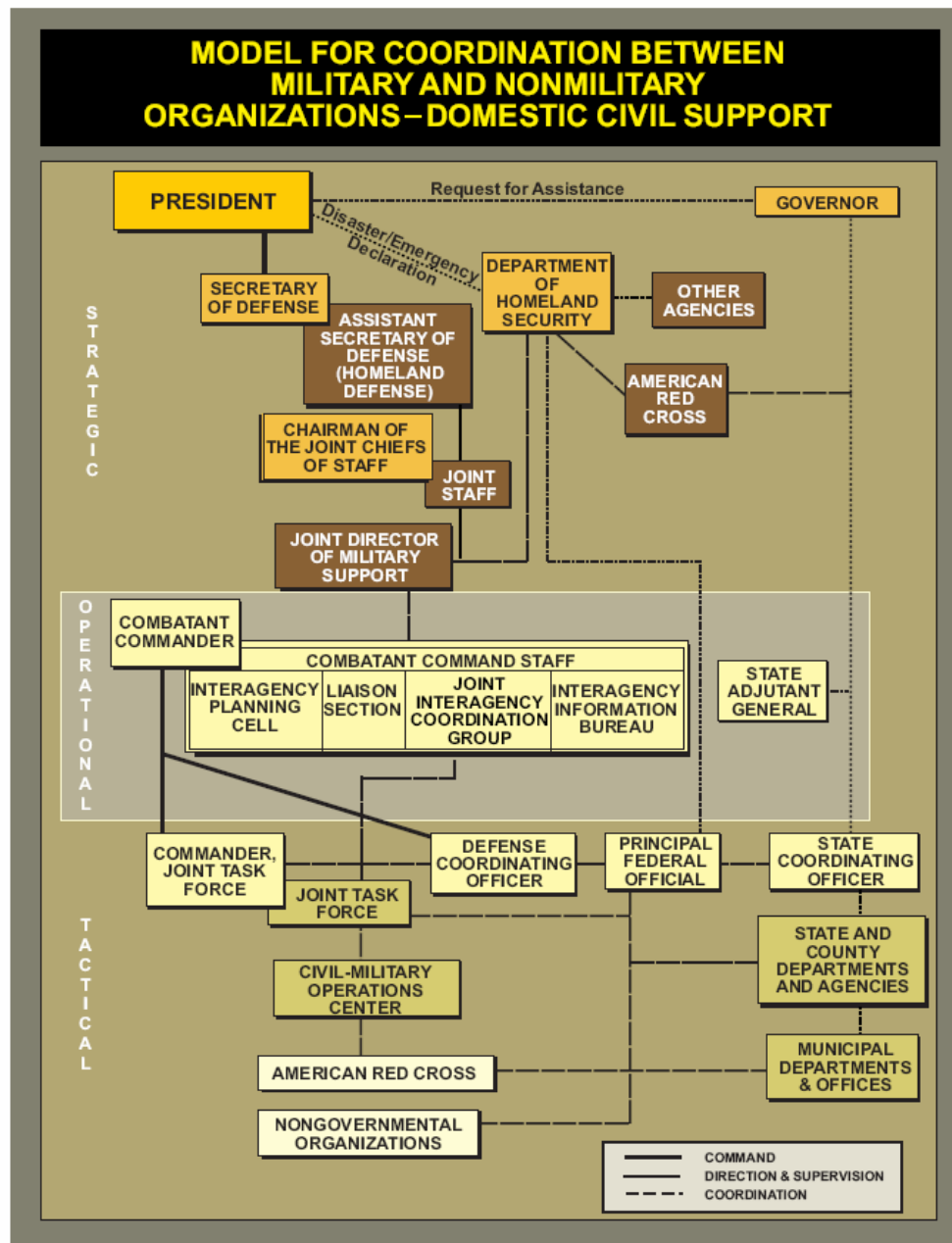


Figure 3. Model for Coordination Between Military and Non-Military Organizations: Domestic Civil Support
Source: (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2006, III-4).

Department of Homeland Security Doctrine

The establishment of the Department of Homeland Security in 2002 created a cabinet-level agency responsible for those USG functions concerning homeland security, including federal response to natural or man-made disasters. As part of this reorganization, the DHS absorbed FEMA, previously a cabinet-level agency. The DHS also oversaw the creation of the National Response Plan (NRP), a unified planning template endorsed by all agencies of the federal government detailing how federal resources can be applied against a domestic disaster.

The purpose of the NRP is to “establish a comprehensive, national, all-hazards approach to domestic incident management across a spectrum of activities including prevention, preparedness, response, and recover” (Department of Homeland Security 2004, 2). Key to the successful application of the NRP is the grouping of related capabilities into Emergency Support Functions (ESF). The 15 ESFs are designed to allow the federal response to be tailored to the unique disaster situation, activating only those federal capabilities required for the current crisis. The NRP is also drafted on the premise that the federal response enhances and supports the efforts and resources of state and local authorities (Department of Homeland Security 2004, 2).

The NRP specifies that the DoD is a supporting agency to DHS for all 15 ESFs, thanks to the breadth and depth of its capabilities and resources. However, it parallels JP 3-08 in that all DoD assets are coordinated through the DCO, collocated at the JFO in the disaster area. Specifically, it states “The Unified Command concept utilized by civil authorities is distinct from the military chain of command.” (Department of Homeland

Security 2004, 10) This is consistent with DoD doctrine and abides by federal law concerning command of military forces.

In essence, the NRP empowers the Principal Federal Officer (PFO) with control of all federal assets, personnel, and resources involved in disaster response, except those owned or controlled by the DoD. The only way the PFO can access DoD resources is by placing a request through the DCO, to the controlling COCOM (typically NORTHCOM), for approval by the Secretary of Defense or his designated representative. DoD also considers “Mission Assignments,” orders to other federal agencies issued by the PFO, as “Requests for Assistance,” because the DoD falls outside of the unified command structure of the NRP (U.S. Congress 2006, 26-7).

The Effectiveness of Interagency Doctrine During Hurricane Katrina

In hindsight, the interagency process, as envisioned by the NRP, collapsed under the weight of the Katrina disaster. The lack of situational awareness by the JFOs in Louisiana and Mississippi combined with the near complete collapse of local and state capabilities in the hardest hit areas, critically delayed deploying federal and state assets in sufficient quantity to respond to all of the needs of the people. These delays, in part, contributed to the perception most people have of the failure of the overall federal response.

In its own internal review of the disaster response to Hurricane Katrina, FEMA identifies the frustration felt by FEMA officials at the cumbersome request and approval process for DoD support. In particular, they note that other federal agencies, acting under the principles of unified command in the NRP, can approve requests for support immediately at the JFO level, whereas requests to DoD must move up the military chain

of command for approval and tasking to the applicable unit (DHS Office of Inspections and Special Reviews 2006, 65). They also identify the fact that the initial military response, under the control of JTF Katrina, was not fully coordinated with other state and federal response efforts, sometimes resulting in the duplication of efforts (DHS Office of Inspections and Special Reviews 2006, 65).

According to congressional investigation of the Katrina response, this lack of coordination resulted as much from the somewhat confused initial deployment of DoD assets as to a lack of FEMA-DoD coordination. It took several days for JTF-Katrina to gain full control and situational awareness of DoD forces operating in the disaster area, thanks to individual commanders and service components, using whatever authorities they could, forward deploying assets into the disaster zone in anticipation of a request for support from FEMA (U.S. Congress 2006, 36). Bypassing the normal coordination protocols and establishing a direct link between JTF-Katrina, state authorities, and the PFO overcame these problems (DHS Office of Inspections and Special Reviews 2006, 64-65). JTF-Katrina then tasked the appropriate DoD resources under its command to respond to requests, replicating the authority to approve requests possessed by other federal agency representatives acting under the unified command principles of the NRP.

The Effect of Proposals for Change

Ironically, very few of the proposals or articles dealing with the subject of interagency cooperation reviewed for this thesis address the interagency process in terms of domestic response. COL G. Scott McConnell, in his article “Interagency Adrift,” perhaps comes the closest. COL McConnell surmises that the true impediment to better interagency cooperation and coordination is the internal cultures of the various agencies

themselves, and what they see “their” role in the interagency process to be. His recommendations involve reform of the interagency process from a cultural standpoint and changes in authority, rather than a requirement for entirely new organizations with new authorities (McConnell 2006, 12).

The congressional investigation of Hurricane Katrina, in its conclusions, seems to reinforce this idea of a cultural impediment to full interagency cooperation between DoD and DHS for domestic incident response. The report raises the question of whether or not the DoD should be relied upon to furnish the level of support it eventually provided for Hurricane Katrina, or if it was more properly the purview of DHS to develop those capabilities internally, retaining the specified role of the DoD as a supporting agency as specified in the NRP (U.S. Congress 2006, 68-69). The FEMA Inspector General echoes these sentiments in his conclusions on the coordination between FEMA and the DoD. Indirectly criticizing the exclusion of the DoD from the unified command structure of the NRP, the FEMA report recommends that the director of FEMA revisit the subject of coordination and expectations of DoD support under the provision of the NRP with the DoD and DHS leadership (DHS Office of Inspections and Special Reviews 2006, 65).

The fact that none of these authors or reports reflect directly on the adequacy of the NRP is perhaps an endorsement of the NRP’s structure itself. Given the limitations of federal law concerning the deployment and command relationships of federal troops for domestic response missions, the NRP structure is fundamentally sound. In the case of Hurricane Katrina, a confluence of events contributed to the breakdown of the system. The basic assumption of the NRP is that the federal effort serves to fill gaps in capabilities and enhance the efforts of local and state response resources in the disaster

area. In the areas of Louisiana and Mississippi most heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina, those state and local capabilities were destroyed or dispersed. Without them, the federal relief effort became the main effort, a scenario for which the NRP was not envisioned.

Conclusions

From the example provided by these two case studies, several conclusions emerge on the adequacy of current interagency doctrine. While every interagency response effort is different, and the requirements and expectations during foreign operations differ from domestic operations, several trends seem to emerge.

First, there is no single proponent for all interagency doctrine. While the National Security Council manages the interagency process at the national level, different USG agencies are free to publish their own doctrinal procedures and expectations for use within their respective organizations. While these doctrinal publications are usually coordinated, the lack of central oversight can create a situation where different agencies have different established procedures that may conflict with each other. A compelling example of this is JP 3-08, which does not directly address the DoD role in the National Response Plan, even though it was published more than a year after the promulgation of the NRP. This is especially surprising because the DoD was an active participant in the drafting and endorsement of the NRP.

Second, current interagency doctrine is inadequate. The current structure of the JIACG is inadequate, mostly due to the freedom of each COCOM commander to tailor participation as he sees fit and the lack of resources devoted to expanding the participation in the various COCOM JIACGs. If the JIACG is going to serve as the

principal method for interagency coordination below the national level, it needs to be fully resourced in terms of manning, authority, and participation by all USG agencies. Participation may be limited to virtual interaction, but the hesitancy of other USG agencies to fully participate in the JIACG must be overcome.

Domestic interagency cooperation differs in form, but not in substance. The NORTHCOM JIACG is clearly the most robust of any COCOM, but still serves only as an advisory and collaborative planning body, lacking the authority to create and execute true interagency operations. This is most evident in the limited authority over non-DoD assets exercised by NORTHCOM.

The NRP is best example of a true, integrated interagency plan, in that it empowers a single PFO with full authority over the federal response to a domestic incident of national significance. However, Hurricane Katrina demonstrated that only the DoD possesses the breadth and depth of capabilities and resources to respond to a catastrophic event that disables or destroys local and state disaster response capabilities. Because federal law exempts the DoD from the unified command structure of the NRP and authority of the PFO, the danger of an uncoordinated response similar to the Katrina relief effort will continue to exist.

Interagency doctrine will only become truly adequate when it shares a single oversight authority that is involved in drafting its provisions and supervising subordinate agency doctrine to ensure commonality of purpose, unity of effort, and full interagency integration. The NRP is an example of the direction in which interagency doctrine needs to move. The concept of a PFO, who possesses full authority over all USG assets applied to a crisis, is required for all USG operations, both foreign and domestic. Further, all

USG agencies need to have specified responsibilities, must empower their representatives serving under the PFO with the authority to commit resources towards the desired objective, and be responsive to needs of the USG effort, rather than the perceived interests of their respective agencies.

The final chapter will summarize my conclusions on whether or not interagency doctrine for a joint task force or similar organization is adequate, as demonstrated by the analysis of these two case studies. It will also make recommendations for further research that can further explore issues raised in the course of researching this thesis.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As demonstrated by the example of the Asian Tsunami Relief operation and Operation Unified Assistance in response to Hurricane Katrina, the current doctrine for interagency coordination at the joint task force level is inadequate. In each of these two examples, current doctrine presented serious obstacles to achieving true unity of effort. USG efforts were finally coordinated in both of these operations by working outside of the doctrinal coordination channels and establishing more direct working relationships between agencies.

Conclusions

An analysis of the Asian Tsunami Relief operation (Operation Unified Assistance) and the federal response to Hurricane Katrina demonstrates several trends regarding the adequacy of interagency doctrine at the JTF level. These trends include a lack of oversight by a single USG proponent of published interagency doctrine, an inadequacy of current doctrine to enable fully integrated and unified interagency efforts at home or abroad, and that an existing interagency planning effort, the National Response Plan, is only a partial blueprint for the direction in which interagency doctrine needs to move.

First, the lack of oversight by a single proponent of published interagency doctrine has allowed different agencies to establish non-complementary or redundant procedures, inconsistent terminology, and differing interpretations of established interagency procedures. The best example examined in this analysis is JP 3-08, the

Department of Defense (DoD) manual governing interagency procedures at the joint task force level. Published more than a year after the circulation of the National Response Plan (NRP), JP 3-08 does not discuss how the NRP affects DoD (and other USG agency) participation in domestic civil support missions for disaster relief.

This is especially alarming because of all USG agencies, the DoD has the most-established oversight procedures for doctrine development, with each service required to ensure that its internal doctrinal publications are fully synchronized with the applicable joint doctrine. The DoD was also fully involved in drafting the structure and provisions of the NRP. For such a lapse to occur demonstrates serious flaws in the overall USG doctrine development system. If doctrine is the common language governing operations between different USG agencies, then this disunity of published doctrine will continue to be an impediment to truly integrated interagency operations.

Second, the selected case studies demonstrated conclusively that current interagency doctrine is inadequate for fully synchronizing USG efforts domestically or overseas. In the first instance, Operation Unified Assistance faced a large-scale crisis involving complex disasters across an entire region. Additionally, the involvement of so many different nations, both those requiring assistance and those providing support, created an incredibly complex operational environment. Had the doctrinal template for coordination and decision-making been followed precisely, the operation would have proceeded ponderously, if at all.

While the model of working through parallel Department of State (DoS) and DoD chains of command for coordinating resources and access to foreign territory may suffice in small operations affecting a single nation, the scope of the disaster required local

coordination and decision-making on the part of both DoD and DoS. United States Pacific Command (PACOM) was successful because the relationships between agencies and national militaries they had already established created an environment conducive to bypassing normal coordination channels.

The PACOM Joint Inter Agency Coordination Group (JIACG) was instrumental in developing these relationships. Resourced internally by the PACOM commander, the JIACG had worked to expand its capabilities and responsibilities as part of the growing role of PACOM in the Global War on Terror. It was simple for the JIACG to leverage these same relationships to support the USG response to the tsunami.

Finally, in the case of Hurricane Katrina, the failure did not lie directly in doctrine, but grew instead out of the limitations of existing federal law and the traditional roles of the DoD within the United States. Because of its constitutional role, the DoD is almost always in support of some other federal agency when working within the U.S., most often, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). For domestic disaster relief, DHS developed the National Response Plan (NRP) as a scalable, modular plan that fully integrates all USG agency support when federal resources are needed for domestic disaster relief.

The NRP is an effective planning document that lives up to its stated purpose of unifying federal efforts, eliminating redundancies, and providing unity of command. However, because of the provisions of the various parts of U.S. Code that govern the command relationships of military forces, DoD is excluded from this unity of command. In small-scale disasters, where DoD involvement entails specific and limited assistance to augment various Emergency Response Functions (ESFs), this exclusion is not a crippling

limitation. However, Hurricane Katrina created a situation where the DoD was the only federal agency with the necessary resources to respond quickly to the disaster. Once military commanders realized the magnitude of the disaster, they responded with the speed and decisiveness expected of them. However, because those efforts were conducted outside of the unified command structure called for in the NRP, the overall USG effort was not synchronized or adequately coordinated.

The NRP needs to be reviewed with an eye toward greater integration of DoD assets into the unified command structure. Given the likelihood of another disaster on a similar scale as Hurricane Katrina striking the United States in the future, the necessity of better integrating the overwhelming capabilities possessed by the DoD is crucial to prevent future relief efforts from suffering the same initial missteps as the Katrina relief operation did. Table 2 graphically details a summary of my conclusions.

Recommendations for Future Research

In order to develop these conclusions further, there are several recommended avenues for future research. All of these either seeks to further define the thesis conclusions specifically, or to explore other aspects of interagency doctrine identified during the analysis as being of significant interest. These include the role of Title 10 command authorities in governing command relationships during interagency operations, the USG doctrine approval process, and the resource challenges faced by non-DoD USG agencies.

Table 2. Summary of Conclusions

Case Study	What is current interagency doctrine?	Who is the proponent for doctrine?	What is required for adequacy?	Is current doctrine adequate?
Asian Tsunami Relief	JP 3-08 (DoD) Field Operations Guide (DoS)	Joint Staff (JP 3-08) USAID (Field Operations Guide)	Full local control of all USG resources by lead	N
Hurricane Katrina	JP 3-08 (DoD) National Response Plan (DHS)	Joint Staff (JP 3-08) DHS/FEMA (National Response Plan)	Full authority over all USG efforts (Unified Command)	N

First, one of the most often invoked explanations for the unique role of the DoD is the specific command relationships for the military specified in Title 10, U.S.C. In the case of the NRP, these provisions of Title 10 prevent the DoD from falling under the unified command structure for disaster relief. An interesting focus of future research would be an analysis of how Title 10 command authorities inhibit many of the proposed reforms of the interagency process. If military forces can never be placed under the full control of another USG agency, how would a true interagency command structure ever be possible?

Second, this analysis demonstrated that while there may be coordination between different USG agencies concerning the publication of doctrine and procedures, there is no process for vetting these published doctrinal references for inconsistencies or

contradictions. An analysis of what the various USG agency procedures for doctrine development could investigate when, where and how these various systems of doctrine development and approval should be synchronized, and whether or not a central vetting process is needed.

Finally, the DoD has repeatedly stressed that interagency coordination is essential for the execution of national policy. The JIACG is a step towards making such coordination routine and effective. However, it is questionable whether other USG agencies see the same value of the JIACG as the DoD does. An analysis of the levels of participation of each non-DoD USG agency provides to the various JIACGs around the world, and how that participation is resourced, would shed additional insight into the future worth of the JIACG concept.

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